

Barnsley Vision Strategy Group

Results of the Vision Survey and Your Sight Matters Event

You filled in a survey in April of this year and/or attended a Your Sight Matters event on Saturday 11th May 2019 at Barnsley Town Hall to talk about services to help people with sight loss.

We looked at what you said in the survey in April and picked out the main themes that people with sight loss feel are important. We talked to people at the event in May about these themes and asked you to decide what is most important. This report explains what **you said** to us and what **we did or are hoping to do** with your help.

1. Information and Services

You said: You are unaware of what support is available in Barnsley for people with sight loss.

We did: We held a number of information and social events during Eye Health Week - 23-29th September 2019 to tell

people about how to look after their eyes but also telling people about our services. We promoted the Eye Health Week through local Well@Work business and in the Barnsley Chronicle. We have also launched our #seeitmyway campaign (just search for #seeitmyway on the internet) where you can find more information about what is happening in Barnsley around sight loss. We plan to have more information events around smoking in relation to sight loss and secondly to hold a children and young people's event in 2020. We have a webpage with information on the Vision Strategy Group and local services for people with sight loss <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/eye-health/>

We are looking at how we promote our services and how we can improve to make sure you know about us and how to get in touch with us.

2. Independence

You said: You would like to know more about how to use digital technology (phones, internet, tablets) safely.

We did: We have given Barnsley Digital Champions sensory awareness training and they have had some training from an RNIB Technology expert on technology that can help people with sight loss. Digital Champions offer one-to-one advice and support on technology at various libraries across Barnsley. We also have asked the RNIB to offer one-to-one training sessions.

3. Well-being

Social/leisure activities for people with sight loss came up as a theme.

You said: Some people said that they would like groups specifically for people with sight loss and some people said they would like to attend groups that are not specifically for people with sight loss (e.g. U3A, gyms, sport groups) but that it would help if those groups had awareness training.

We did: We have been working with colleagues in sports and leisure to identify opportunities for people with sight loss. We have also identified two coaches with sight loss who offer karate and cricket coaching, and are seeking ways in which we can promote their sessions.

If you attend a group that you feel would benefit from awareness training then please contact us to discuss further (contact details are at the end).

You said: You felt you would benefit from support to come to terms with your sight loss through peer support, self-help groups and from a resource centre specifically for people with a sensory loss (i.e. sight and hearing).

We did: There are already some peer support groups in Barnsley. Visually Impaired Peer Support (VIPS) who meet the first Monday of every month and Barnsley Blind & Partially Sighted Association who run two groups during the week, Tuesday and Friday. If you would like more information please contact us.

Regarding the idea of a resource centre, we are exploring the different ways in which services could be delivered. We know that services can differ across the country. We want to work with you to look at what would work best in Barnsley. There is a lot more work to do here but we are making a start.

4. Community

You said: You have problems with transport – buses, trains and taxis and this was a priority you wanted us to work on.

We did: We asked those at the May event if they were interested in being involved in a working group looking at transport. We contacted those interested and have met up to look at how to improve transport. Stagecoach and Northern Rail have been contacted and are happy to work with us on improving their services. This is on-going work and we will update you with our progress.

5. Public Awareness

Lots of people have experienced rudeness/unhelpfulness from members of the public due to their sight loss.

You said: You feel there is a need to educate the public about the realities of living with sight loss and this was a priority you wanted us to work on.

We did: We asked those at the May event if they were interested in being involved in a working group looking at how to promote good public awareness. We will be contacting those interested soon to invite them to come to a meeting to talk about this more.

And finally...

if you wish to find out more about the information provided above or get involved in the work that the Barnsley Vision Strategy Group is looking at, please contact Emma White (Chair of Barnsley Vision Strategy Group) on telephone: 07834171463 or email: seeitmyway@barnsley.gov.uk

Thank you for your help with the survey and engagement event and your continued support. It is very much appreciated. Your help is vital to any improvements made in Barnsley. Thank you.